The Fresno Bee

FORUM

WORLD
NATION ★ STATE

Sunday, July 13, 1969 1-C

- Background News
- Comment
- Campus Viewpoint
- Lively Arts
- Books—Art

Mineral King, Pro And Con

Last month the Sierra Club filed suit to block the resort development of Mineral King, the two-mile-long alpine valley 55 miles east of Visalia at 7,800 feet in the Sierra.

The conservation organization, 77,000 members strong, first approved a small-scale resort development, then four years ago changed its position. The would-be developers, Walt Disney Productions, scaled down original plans for a winter ski resort, but now the Sierra Club says the area should be left as it is.

Put simply, the question is whether a relatively unspoiled mountain area should be opened up to the masses by large-scale resort development, or whether it should be reserved for the few who can expend the time and effort to reach this remote Sierra locale.

Here are the opposing points of view, taken from official position papers released by the two organizations.

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Conservationist View

By The Sierra Club

The mountains provide variety for our lives — clean air and water, quiet, solitude, uncluttered vistas, and beauty. These things we prize, but they must be guarded, for they can disappear as quickly in the mountains as they have elsewhere.

Clean air and water can be polluted, quiet and solitude can be lost to the crowds, the vistas and beauty overwhelmed by structures of man. That is what may happen to Mineral King.

Mineral King has special natural characteristics and recreational attributes of great value. Although its scenic and ecological features are reminiscent of many other regions of the High Sierra, Mineral King is in many ways unique. Here a primitive road reaches to the headwaters of a major river providing direct access to at least five alpine passes. Yet the two-mile-long valley is essentially unspoiled.

Mineral King's U-shaped basin is rimmed with peaks rising three to four thousand feet above the valley floor to heights of over 12,000 feet. Six streams cascade into the valley from the heights above, and join to flow through meadows and groves of aspen and cottonwood. A number of alpine lakes are within less than two hours walking distance of the roadhead from which trails radiate in all directions into the southern part of Sequoia National Park, including the magnificent Great Western Divide - Big Kern Sierra to the east, and into Little Kern territory of Sequoia National Forest to the south, over Farewell Gap.

Because of supposedly valuable mineral deposits, the Mineral King valley and its environs were left out of Sequoia National Park in the early days, even though the area is ecologically part of the park and comprises the headwaters of the East Fork of the Kaweah River which flows through the park farther downstream. The area is under the jurisdiction of the U. S. Forest Service, and was designated the Sequoia National Game Refuge by Act of Congress in 1926.

The "improvements" within the area consists of about 60 cabins, along or near the river, most of which are leased from the Forest Service for summer use. These cabins, a pack station, a small general store and post office, several campsites and a few remnants of the early-days mining activity occupy less than 10 per cent of the total area of the refuge. The remainder is wilderness where mule deer and other wildlife abound.

In addition to its function as a wildlife refuge, Mineral King now serves as a natural recreation area for hikers, sightseers, campers, fishermen, and students of natural history. Some visitors remain near the rustic village and campsites on the valley floor, others travel on foot or on

See Sierra, Page 2-C

Bee Photo

'UNSPOILED' — The alpine bowl called Mineral King rests under a heavy mantle of snow, up to 30 feet deep this winter at upper elevations in Farewell Gap and White Chief Bowl. In the center foreground, dotted among the trees, are the aging wooden structures that make up Mineral King Village.

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Endorsing Development

By E. Cardon Walker
Executive vice president, Walt Disney Productions

In view of recent public discussion concerning the development by the U. S. Forest Service of public recreational facilities at Mineral King in Sequia National Forest, we believe it is appropriate for Walt Disney Productions, as the permittee selected after competitive public bidding, to restate its position regarding this proposed project.

Mineral King, an area of unexcelled natural beauty, is located along the western slopes of the High Sierra, and has long been recognized as potentially one of the most outstanding year-round recreational areas in the world.

Alpine in character and covering nearly 15,000 acres, Mineral King offers snowfall and terrain for skiing and other winter sports equal to six Squaw Valleys. In the summertime, the area is transformed into a wonderland of mountain glades, 20 crystal lakes and waterfalls, pine forests and grassy meadows — ideal for family outdoor recreation, such as hiking, camping, fishing and other warm weather activities.

National Park and Forest lands adjacent to Mineral King now include nearly two million acres of wilderness for those who desire to hike or back pack to their destination. Mineral King does not now qualify, nor could it ever qualify, as "wilderness," under the definition in the 1964 Federal Wilderness Act.

A dangerous and substandard public road, in existence since early mining days, has made Mineral King accessible to a small number of visitors during the summer months. Many structures may be found on the several hundred acres of private land in the area, including about one hundred cabins, campsites, a post office and general store, a pack station and a large and unsightly garbage dump. Due to inadequate public facilities, pollution now exists in the nearby stream.

In the winter, however, snow completely blocks the road, which is too steep and narrow to clear, making Mineral King accessible only by snow vehicles and effectively concealing from the general public its winter splendor and recreational opportunities.

Master Plan

With these facts in mind, and after 20 years of study, during which it developed a master plan for the conservation of National Forest lands in California, the U. S. Forest Service designated Mineral King for recreational development. In establishing its conservation master plan, the Forest Service determined that Mineral King was best suited to serve the vast majority of our growing population, who desire to travel to their vacation destination by automobile.

Thus, on March 1, 1965, the Forest Service issued a prospectus inviting the public to submit competitive proposals for an all-year recreational development at Mineral King. As the means of access, the prospectus specifically required the improvement of the public road to all-weather standards.

The development would be on public land, under the administration of the Forest Service, exactly as has previously been done with almost 200 other winter recreation areas throughout the United States.

Bidding

It was not until all decisions regarding the future use of, and means of access to, Mineral King had been made by the government agencies responsible, that Walt Disney and his organization entered the competitive bidding.

To the Forest Service call, Walt Disney personally responded in good faith to fulfill the ever-growing need for adequate family outdoor recreational opportunities.

After nearly four months of intensive study, the Forest Service chose the Disney proposal over five other presentations. This plan has since been approved and endorsed at every level of state and federal government, under

See Disney, Page 2-C

After Bitter Budgeting, Solons Limp To Close

By Richard Rodda
Political Editor, McClatchy Newspapers

The 1969 state legislative session is limping to a close after the bloodiest budget fights in many years.

Seldom have California lawmakers been involved in more intrigue: Partisan power struggling, Senate-Assembly rivalry, intraparty warfare, anti-Reagan maneuvering, leadership fighting — you name it.

Much of it came to the surface during the recent battle to pass the $6.24 billion Reagan budget. Democrats in the state Assembly played the aggressive role, reversing the situation of recent years when a Republican minority sought to embarrass Democratic Gov. Edmund G. Brown.

Led by Assemblyman Jess Unruh of Los Angeles County, who undoubtedly will challenge Ronald Reagan for the governorship in 1970, the Democrats sought to build a record on which they could base their campaign.

Tax reform was one of the prices the Democrats insisted on for their support of the Reagan budget, but they were more interested in putting through a tax reform program which would discredit Reagan than they were in helping the taxpayer.

Unable to achieve this objective, they settled on school funds as their primary demand and achieved some success in the final version of the budget.

Unusual Role

Republicans played an unusual role in the budget fight. They were caught in the position of "saving" the governor from his own tax program, since it had so many bugs in it. One roll call on a parliamentary maneuver in the lower house found all but one Republican (E. Richard Barnes of San Diego County) casting a vote technically against the governor.

At this stage of the game the governor's tax program had so much built-in opposition — county supervisors, farmers, oil interests, to name a few — the Democrats would have been in good shape for 1970, taking on the governor on a tax program hardly anyone wanted. The counties were angry over the proposed freeze on property tax rates; farmers were infuriated because their property would be assessed at a higher rate than residential property, and the oil interests did not like the idea of tampering with their depletion allowances.

There was internal strife in both parties. Democrats maintained a solid front to the end, but there were reports a number were ready to stage a revolt, as the state went for three days without a budget. Word came out of the minority caucus that Assemblymen Willie Brown Jr. of San Francisco, Bob Moretti of Los Angeles County and Kenneth Cory of Orange County were the "hawks" who kept opposition to the budget going. This led to speculation these three, plus caucus chairman George N. Zenovich of Fresno County, are ambitious to succeed Unruh as party leader. Unruh has stated he will not seek reelection in 1970.

Bickering

The Republicans also found it difficult to keep the lid on their internal bickering. There is a serious split between the conservatives and the moderates in the GOP, plus an obvious split between many Republicans and Gov. Reagan.

Assemblyman William T. Bagley of Marin County, chairman of the Revenue and Taxation Committee, is a strong advocate of a withholding system for collection of state income taxes and has had to restrain himself from getting into a public debate with the governor on the issue. Gov. Reagan took a dim view of Bagley at last week's news conference, saying the Marin County Republican is so wrapped up in his own tax proposals he "isn't aware of many of the facets of ours or what is going on."

Assembly Speaker Robert T. Monagan found himself in disagreement with the governor on the tax rebate issue. The governor wants to return $100 million to income taxpayers next year. "We ought to utilize those funds in the best management of our fiscal affairs, and maybe using those funds for construction purposes may be the wisest course of action for us," commented Monagan a few days ago.

Only a simple mind could not see that an election year tax rebate would be a terrific campaign gimmick for an incumbent governor. The governor may find more members of his own party will not rally behind him on this.

The most serious split between the GOP and the governor came last week, again in the Assembly, when 17 Republicans joined 37 Democrats to support a $372 million increase in state school support in the face of the governor's warning he will veto anything more for schools than the budget already provides, which is $120 million plus certain surplus funds.

Capitol watchers have to refer back to the 1950s and the 1940s to find parallels to some of the 1969 legislative strife.

This year the Senate changed leaders in midstream. This has not happened since 1940, when a sudden shift in power in the Assembly resulted in the replacement of Speaker Paul Peek with Gordon H. Garland, both Democrats. Peek was a strong follower of Gov. Culbert L. Olson, while Garland was part of an anti-Olson coalition.

This year it was a bipartisan coalition which forced Democratic Sen. Hugh M. Burns of Fresno County out of his leadership position in the upper house in the middle of a session. Republican Sen. Howard Way of Tulare County is the new president pro tempore of the upper house.

Both parties are divided in the upper house, and the feelings are probably much more intense than they are in the Assembly. Actually, the GOP unity pitch, which the party likes to promote at campaign time, is a myth as far as the Senate is concerned.

The GOPers have had technical control of the upper house for two years. It was not until May of this year they developed the muscle to oust Democrat Burns, and even then they had to have the support of eight insurgent Democrats.

Burns maintained his hold on the Senate gavel through his friendship with Old Guard Republicans, plus the support of special interest lobbyists who exercise considerable influence behind the scenes in the Capitol.

Big Spenders

Theoretically the Senate now is free of domination by the lobbyists and their big spending habits. This is comparable to what happened in the Assembly in 1953, when a "good government" GOP faction ended the regime of the late Speaker Sam L. Collins. In those days it was an open secret that lobbyists, particularly Arthur H. Samish, the notorious liquor lobbyist, dictated committee appointments in the lower house.

The 1969 budget fight was a nightmare, but the pattern was set in 1958 and 1963. Under the administration of Republican Gov. Goodwin J. Knight the legislature became embroiled in a sectional battle over water. The 1958 budget went down to defeat over the refusal of the legislature to finance the state water plan. It was necessary for Gov.

See Solons, Page 2-C

Grape Boycott: Growers Air Problems

By Steven V. Roberts
New York Times News Service

ARVIN — This is the 43rd season that John Kovacevich has grown grapes in the San Joaquin Valley. His father and five uncles before him also raised grapes here after they migrated "to the promised land" from the Austro - Hungarian island of Hvar in 1900.

After all that time, Kovacevich still lives in uncertainty. In 1961 a fierce "burn" — a sudden heat wave two days before the harvest began — almost wiped him out. Two years later a rain storm during harvest season destroyed 80 per cent of the unpicked grapes. Kovacevich had to sell half of his land just to stay in business.

And for almost four years, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee under Cesar Chavez has staged strikes and boycotts against Kovacevich and other growers, demanding recognition as the bargaining agent for farm workers and labor contracts guaranteeing higher wages and job security.

The farm workers' cause has received strong support from organized labor, many liberal politicians, including the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy and his brother, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D - Mass., and numbers of average citizens who have refused to buy and eat California table grapes.

The growers believe they are "misunderstood" by the public, but they have disagreed among themselves on how to proceed. Recently Kovacevich and nine other major growers agreed to open negotiations with the union — an act that infuriated the majority of growers who refuse even to talk to the union.

"Some of the growers have told me I will get my reward in hell," said Kovacevich, a tall man whose 60 years show only in his thinning hair and creased face. "And they have been my friends all my life."

While the negotiations continued, 81 other growers filed an antitrust suit against the union. They charged that the boycott had cost them $25 million in reduced sales and asked the court for treble damages, or $75 million.

The suit was the first acknowledgement by many growers that the boycott was succeeding. (The 10 growers who decided to start negotiations had insisted the boycott was hurting them badly).

But if the growers differ on strategy, they generally agree that the strike can only be settled, as one put it, "if the union shows it understands our problems and indicates that it wants us to stay in business."

These problems begin with the fact that table grapes "are one of the most highly pampered commodities in the world," according to John Giumarra Jr., the general counsel and chief spokesman for one of the state's largest growers, Guimarra Vineyard Corp.

Numerous procedures such as pruning and girdling the vines must be carried on throughout the year to produce the kind of grape demanded by the consumer, he observed.

Another problem is that wages have risen since 1960 from about $1 an hour to $1.65 an hour, partly because of the union's organizing activity, as have taxes, interest rates and the cost of machinery.

The wholesale price of grapes, however, has stayed steady for about 15 years at roughly $3.50 to $4 a box for the popular Thompson Seedless variety. "The result," Guimarra said, "is that the entire industry is caught in a cost - price squeeze."

In the Coachella Valley, several hundred miles to the south, the squeeze has helped bankrupt two - thirds of the growers, according to Lionel

See Growers, Page 2-C

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An Epitaph For The Anti-Social Auto Engine

By Charles Fox

"There are four interconnected threads to the planet earth — wars of mass destruction, overpopulation, pollution and the depletion of resources," said Professor Richard A. Falk of Princeton University in a recent New York Times interview.

"They have a cumulative effect. A problem in one area renders it more difficult to solve the problems in any oth-

Charles Fox is feature editor of Car and Driver magazine, from which this article is reprinted with permission.

er area. All these problems are caused by the discretion vested in national government, and in some instances in individual choice. The basis of all four problems is the inadequacy of the sovereign states to manage the affairs of mankind in the 20th century.

"John Maynard Keynes long ago spoke of the paradox of aggregation — that the definition of rational self-interest is different for the individual than for the community. If one's car is polluting the atmosphere, the addition to the general pollution is so infinitesimal that there is no rational incentive to forbear from driving or to spend money on an anti-pollution filter.

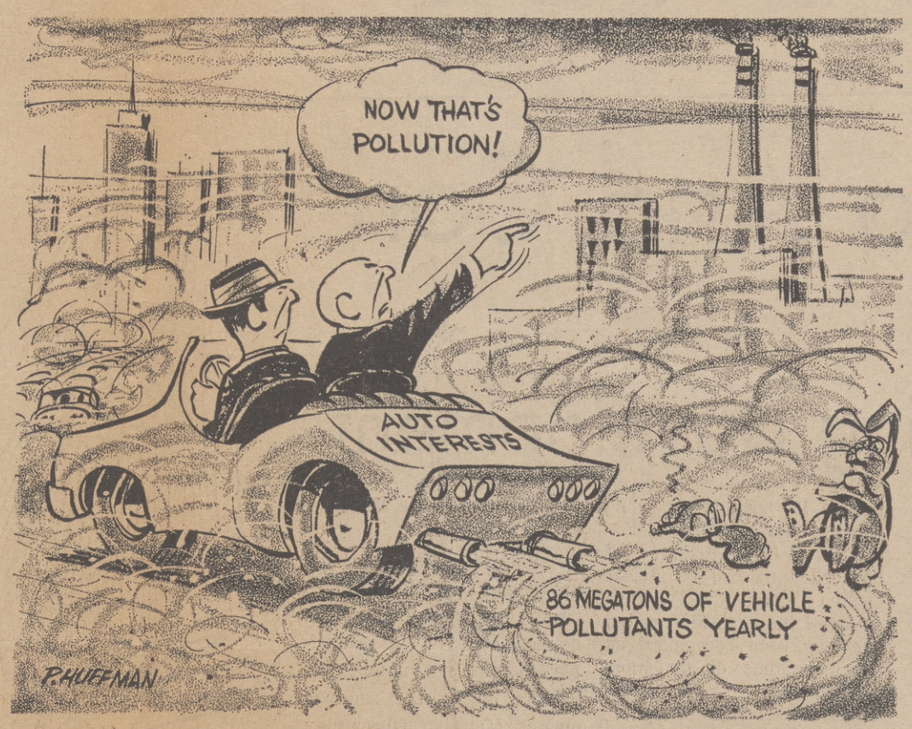
"This same logic applies to corporate behavior in the pursuit of profits and to nations seeking wealth, power and prestige."

It seems, rather by accident, that Professor Falk has already composed an epitaph for the reciprocating internal combustion engine. As hard as the automobile manufacturers and oil companies are fighting to protect their interests in preserving it, the IC engine is a loser, destined for oblivion well within our lifetimes.

It has been around now for about 75 years. In that time we have succeeded in making it an inexpensive, universal source of power. But we have also succeeded in making it an extremely anti-social device.

The Department of Air Pollution Control in New York City estimates that automotive traffic daily exhales 9,600,000 pounds of carbon monoxide into the city streets. Automobiles contribute 60.6 per cent of the total waste being pumped into the city's air, with industry making up 16.2 per cent and power plants 14.1. Throughout the U.S., "transport" is responsible for 90 per cent of the carbon monoxide polluting the atmosphere, 66 per cent of all unburned hydrocarbons (in the form of gasoline vapor) and 33 per cent of the nitrogen oxides.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, motor vehicles release 86 megatons of pollutants into the atmosphere annually. In real-speak that's 86 million tons. Industry, power plants, space heating and refuse disposal combined contribute a further 56 megatons. We keep pumping the stuff into the air we



breathe with little idea what really happens to it or what it is doing to us.

The research picture looks like this. It took 20 years to establish to the satisfaction of everyone, with the predictable exception of Detroit, that the IC engine is mainly responsible for producing the plant and people killing photochemical smog—which Southern Californians used to boast, with some pride, was exclusive to the Los Angeles area. L.A. no longer has an exclusive. Today, 6,000 cities and towns with a population of 50,000 or more, have an urgent air pollution problem, as do 40 per cent of those towns with populations between 2,500 and 50,000.

In L.A. it took 20 years before the IC engine was indicted, before anyone dared point to the sacred cow, because first the city went off on a witch hunt which took in the manufacturers of synthetic rubber, the oil refineries, and even garden incinerators.

It was even suggested that nature herself was cooking the stuff up out over the Pacific and then blowing it in all over the defenseless city folk. Finally, it was agreed that smog is what you get when you bake together carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen and sulfur, and unburned hydrocarbons (all of which are emitted by the IC engine). Sunlight does this well. Anyway, while one section of the scientific community was finding out what smog is, another section was getting into what it does—to plants, animals, and ourselves. Their discoveries were not encouraging.

Doctor Stephen Ayres has done extensive research on the subject at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City. "To put it very simply," he said "carbon monoxide starves you of oxygen." It mixes more easily with hemoglobin than does oxygen — and hemoglobin in the red blood cells is the primary carrier of oxygen to the bloodstream. The loss of oxygen is particularly serious for people with respiratory ailments or weak hearts. It slows down the brain, impairs vision and causes drowsiness.

"Yes," said Dr. Ayres, "carbon monoxide is in a class by itself. The remainder of the exhaust gases primarily act as irritants, generally to the lungs, which is again serious for people with respiratory ailments.

"There is another dangerous pollutant," he continued, "and that is the lead which is introduced into gasoline in anti-knock additives. This is exhausted in the form of particles which lodge in the lungs and eventually become absorbed into the body tissue. In large doses lead can cause coma, in smaller quantities it attacks the nervous system, causing people to become depressed and irritable."

When this kind of information became available, California, which has more cars on the road than most of the world's intermediate-sized nations, was already on the panic button. Two years ago, Frank M. Stead, chief of the California State Department of Public Health's Division of Environmental Sanitation, advocated that by 1980 every IC engine should be off the road and that legal notice to that effect should be served on the parties involved now.

It is an extreme point of view, but far more realistic than that held by Charles M. Heinen, who is apparently Chrysler Corporation's mouthpiece when it comes to air pollution.

Heinen maintains that, "The main battle against air pollution has been won. If there were no other vehicles on the road except 1969-1970 models, we would—overnight—breathe the same clean air we had in 1940, as far as the automobile is concerned." He would have you believe that photochemical smog is good for you and dribbles out incredibly absurd pieces of trivia: " . . . eight hours in the city streets has less effect from the point of view of carbon monoxide than two cigarettes."

If Heinen wants to smoke, that is his business; we have no choice but to breathe air. And perhaps he has never seen the Los Angeles blight. Perhaps he has forgotten that air pollution is costing this country $13 billion annually, or $65 a head. Perhaps he isn't aware that the general public regards smog control devices as a pain in the neck.

And while he's standing up there telling you what wonderful things the industry is doing to combat pollution ask him to tell you about the anti-trust suit recently slapped against every major auto manufacturer in the U.S. by the Justice Department for conspiring for over a decade to delay the development and uses of smog control devices.

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Solons: Year Of Strife

From Page 1-C

Knight to call a special session to get a budget.

The budget was caught in a partisan fight in 1963, as Republicans thwarted Gov. Brown. Again, it became necessary to summon the lawmakers back in special session to complete the task of enacting a budget.

Thus, the antagonists locked horns this year, knowing a precedent had been set for a fight to the finish. This year, however, the situation got further out of hand and the state was without authority to spend any money for three days. Responsible lawmakers have introduced a measure designed to prevent such "fiscal chaos" in the future. But with the lawmakers seemingly enjoying their annual partisan fun and games, one wonders whether a fool proof system can be designed. As they say in the Capitol, each year the lawmakers find a new way to throw the budget into a state of confusion.

There is another strange twist to the 1969 legislative session. For years the Senate had the reputation of being the responsible upper house. Reckless legislation originating in the Assembly would be killed in the Senate.

This year the Assembly has demonstrated more responsibility. The Senate has a small but noisy group of ultra-conservatives who have been successful in ramming through many "punitive" bills on the subject of campus unrest and restrictive legislation on the subject of pornography.

The Senate bills have been watered down by the Assembly. Remaining legislation in these two fields appear to meet constitutional tests and protect the civil rights of citizens.

The conservative image of the legislature has come into full bloom this year, following a national trend which has seen liberal and moderate candidates go down to defeat at the hands of the law and order boys.

This year the Senate rejected a resolution to set aside the first anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King as a day in his honor. A pro-United Nations resolution barely squeaked through the upper house. It is reliably reported Gov. Reagan would have been "annoyed" if either a King or a UN resolution reached his desk.

Two incidents of alleged conflict of interest of lawmakers embarrassed the Senate this year and may have played a part in changing the leadership. First was the report Sen. Burns and a lobbyist profited from some insurance legislation. A similar report concerned Sen. Richard J. Dolwig, R-Marin County. The latter also was under fire because of his asserted role in blocking a Bay Conservation and Development Commission bill for many weeks.

The legislature tentatively has chosen the week of Aug. 4 for adjournment. Still to come will be more fireworks on the tax programs, settlement of the fight to save San Francisco Bay from being filled, and continued oratory on school financing.

It is obvious Gov. Reagan is losing his grip on the GOP troops. This happens to every governor. He must make his greatest headway in his first year or two. Then the frustrations set in. Capitol watchers will be counting the GOP defections between now and legislative adjournment.

Disney Building Plans

From Page 1-C

two administrations and both political parties.

In fulfillment of its commitment under a three-year planning permit, the company further refined its master plan and obtained final approval for the development in January, 1969.

The elimination of visitor automobiles from the valley floor, a sub-level automobile reception center, and a completely self-contained village reached via electric, cog-assist railway, are among the highlights of the plan, which is designed to insure maximum protection and enhancement of the area's unique scenic values.

By 1978, the sub-level reception center will provide covered parking for 3,600 automobiles and buses. Winter recreation facilities will serve 8,500 skiers daily, of whom approximately 40 per cent may be accommodated overnight.

The elimination of visitor vehicles from the valley will permit buildings to be situated in patterns compatible with natural land contours, and streets to be designed as "park-walks," or tree-lined concourses, suitable for skiers, pedestrians or horse drawn sleighs.

Thus, the area will be free from noise and potential exhaust fumes, as well as the danger which results from combining pedestrians and automobiles. No other winter recreation area in America has been master planned in such detail, or with such care for the preservation of a site's natural beauty.

In April, 1967, the California Highway Commission, recognizing the economic benefits, employment opportunities and new tax revenues the development will bring to the San Joaquin Valley, and acknowledging the need for additional recreational opportunities in California, adopted a financing schedule which calls for the road's completion by October, 1973. Mineral King will then be within four hour's driving time from Southern California, where there is a lack of nearby areas with reliable and adequate snowfall.

In November, 1968, the Department of the Interior formally announced approval of the State Highway Engineer's route for that portion of the road which crosses Sequoia National Park. Design standards have since been agreed upon by Highway Engineers and Park Service representatives.

It is important to note that similar state highways provide access to all other National Parks and National Forests in California. In the case

of the Mineral King road, the highway engineers have chosen a route and designed a roadway which will preserve and make accessible the area's natural scenic values, without disturbing a single redwood tree.

On April 21, 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson, under whose administration this project was initiated, expressed the federal government's continuing policy of cooperation with private enterprise in the field of outdoor recreation when he signed a memorandum, which stated in part:

"I wish to again emphasize the importance of strengthening the cooperative relationship between government and private enterprise in the field of outdoor recreation. Only by this cooperation can we meet most effectively the growing demand for adequate, accessible and reasonably priced outdoor recreation facilities."

Mineral King offers an outstanding opportunity for government and private enterprise to work together to meet this need — the development of a year-round recreation center to serve families of all income levels.

Walt Disney Productions is one of the few companies with the resources, creativity, experience, and public trust to successfully meet this challenge.

Walt Disney once said, "When I first saw Mineral King, I thought it was one of the most beautiful places in the world, and we will keep it that way. With its development, we will prove once again that man and nature can work together to the benefit of both."

The Forest Service has designated Mineral King for recreational development to provide the greatest good for the greatest number of Californians. That is the continuing commitment of this corporation, as it was for Walt Disney himself.

DISNEY'S PROPOSAL for development of Mineral King is shown in this rendering of the area around a sub-level automobile reception center near Lower Mosquito Bowl, where visitors would leave autos and take a cog railway 1.3 miles to the village. "Mineral King will in no way be another Disneyland," the promoters say.

Sierra Club's Arguments

From Page 1-C

horseback into the unspoiled high country of the Refuge.

Mineral King carries no "admission charge" and is accessible to anyone who wishes to take the leisurely and scenic drive along the narrow access road above the spectacular canyon of the East Fork of the Kaweah from the town of Three Rivers

The U.S. Forest Service has regrettably approved the master plan of Walt Disney Productions for turning this game refuge into a $35 million mass recreation resort designed to attract almost 1 million visitors per year. This is roughly half the visitation that already causes a serious overcrowding in Yosemite, and Yosemite is approximately eight times the size of Mineral King!

Moreover, the Disney resort will be primarily a summer resort with 60 per cent of the total visitation expected during the summer months, when the impact of such a heavy visitation would be the greatest. At Mineral King this would mean that the tiny valley (300 acres) would be subjected to the tread of 5,000 to 10,000 people per day.

While the current development plan is over-sized, the original Disney plan, which was accepted by the Forest Service, specified a visitation level of 2.5 million! And even with that gigantic base, Walt Disney stated in the Disney bid, "All of us promise that our efforts now and in the future will be dedicated to making Mineral King grow to meet the ever-increasing public need. I guess you might say that it won't ever be finished!"

In an era when the diversity of the natural American landscape is fast being destroyed by those who seek economic gains from projects such as this, massive commercialization of Mineral King is a monumental mistake. A development of this size would cause irreparable physical damage to the region, destroying the remote, natural character, not only of Mineral King but also of surrounding areas of Sequoia National Park.

The wilderness in and around Mineral King, by definition a perishable commodity, can easily be overwhelmed in the attempt to display it to the greatest possible number of people. Building a high standard highway into Mineral King in order to "make wilderness accessible to the millions," can only be self-defeating — a little like carving up Michelangelo's statue of "David" so that each of us might own one small chip of marble.

Landscape

Natural landscape like Mineral King — the land and the life it supports — is important in itself, even when it is not being used or admired by large numbers of visitors. Apparently, those who wish to develop this area feel that the value of Mineral King is "wasted" during winter months when snows often block the present access road. It is no more wasted than any other conservation reserve that has been spared from commercialism.

It cannot be denied that the proposed Disney development would provide additional skiing opportunities for California, but in terms of planning for the future, it should be recognized that wild natural areas are becoming increasingly scarce and cannot be increased in number or in size, while ski centers and other man-made developments are constantly being made more abundant. California has other areas which are adequate for new ski developments such as Yuba Gap, Dunderberg, and Sherwin Bowl, although on a less massive scale.

The foregoing considerations emphasize the urgent need to include Mineral King in Sequoia National Park now that mining is defunct. The Sierra Club endorses National Park status as the best long-range solution to the problem of adequate protection for the fragile natural values of the refuge.

Under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, the future development of the upper reaches of the East Fork can be limited to a moderate level of improved camping facilities and other services commensurate with a "jumping off point" for the back country. Without this status for Mineral King, the pressure will always be present for ever-intensified commercialization.

To show that this potential danger is not being exaggerated, a condominium type development is being planned on 80 acres (for the initial stage) of private land at the road entrance to the game refuge. This private development is designed for an initial capacity of 1,000 visitors per day, equal to a third of the Disney capacity after five years. Furthermore, this proposed Well-Seaborn development has substantial additional acreage on which to expand. This project, which can only serve to intensify the visitor impact on Mineral King, is immediately adjacent to Sequoia National Park and would impinge upon an outstanding grove of Giant Sequoias that extends across the park boundary in this area.

Highway

Neither the Disney nor the Wells - Seaborn project would be possible without the construction of the $25 million highway through the semi-wilderness of Sequoia National Park to the west. The Sierra Club feels that the taxpayers' money must not be spent to construct a new highway through a national park to accommodate private developers. A minimum of $22 million in State highway funds would be required for the construction—money that could better be spend for urgent highway neds elsewhere in Southern California. Further public funds would be expended to plow the road during the ski season.

Investments of this magnitude might better be made in areas nearer to the large segments of the California population who are economically disadvantaged and who are truly in need of outdoor recreational opportunities close to home.

Growers Seek 2 Laws

From Page 1-C

Steinberg, a large grower (and former Fresnan) in the town of Thermal, who is acting as spokesman for the 10 growers negotiating with the union.

Guimarra conceded that "efficient vineyards are still making a good profit," but many growers believe at least two laws are necessary to enable them to survive in the long run.

One is a national minimum-wage law for agriculture that would put California on an equal footing with other states. California farmers pay as high as 25 per cent more for wages than other states but must sell their produce on the same market.

Second, the growers point out that farm work will always be a seasonal occupation and assert that workers should be protected by federal unemployment insurance. Most agricultural workers are now excluded from unemployment benefits.

Third, the farmers want a law that would establish ground rules for labor disputes in agriculture. In particular, they want to prohibit strikes at harvest time. But the union insists that they have economic power only during picking season and could not force the growers to bargain in good faith if they could not threaten to strike at harvest.

The hostility of most growers toward the union, however, springs not only from economic considerations but from their own experience and the prevailing political climate.

Like Kovacevich, many of the growers were immigrants or the children of immigrants who came from Italy or Eastern Europe with little money and considerable ambition. Giumarra's father and three uncles, for instance, came from Sicily and started as fruit peddlers before buying their first land. They now own thousands of acres planted with a dozen different crops.

These farmers have long fought the idea of any agricultural union. Many are gradually accepting the inevitability of some union; but they remain deeply apprehensive about Chavez and his allies.

Union officials believe the deeper problem is that the growers regard their Mexican and Filipino workers as essentially inferior — an attitude that has long permeated the social fabric of California and helped keep the Mexicans submerged in the same way that the Negro was subjugated in the south.

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